home by byzinha

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or the one when they almost kissed in the basement bathroom

home

Author's Note:

It's the Mileven Week officially! I'll participate with 4 fics, and I hope you guys enjoy them :D
Thanks Jenna (littlecajunlady) for beta reading this! ^^

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remember that time we almost kissed in the basement bathroom?

Even though her hands were still a little shaky and her head a little dizzy from saving Mike from falling to his death, Eleven wasn't hungry and declined Dustin's offer of a snack.

At that moment, all she wanted was to clean up, even if just a bit, and Mike seemed to understand that, because he took her hand and guided her to the basement bathroom.

She got inside leaving the door open, but for a moment all El could do was sit on the toilet bowl and stare down at her trembling hands.

A shadow joined her in the bathroom and turned on the water in the sink. She didn't move as Mike looked for something in the cabinet, nor when he stepped closer in the small bathroom to kneel in front of her.

Mike took one of El's hands and started cleaning it with a wet cloth ever so gently, his fingers grasping at her wrist carefully.

El looked up at him. From this close she could see all his freckles, maybe even count them. His eyes were really dark and full of concentration. He got to work on her other hand, so she reached for the towel that was hanging behind him, the same towel she used before, when she was alone and could take a shower in that very bathroom.

El's gesture startled Mike a little and he leaned back, giving her space.

"Sorry," she whispered. She didn't want to scare him.

"No, it's okay," he replied quickly shaking his head. "I just…" Mike bit his lips as he looked up at her, and some red came to his cheeks. "I don't want to invade your personal space, I know you don't like it."

"Mike," El said almost smiling, but she didn't know what to say next, didn't know how to put in words what she felt about his generosity and understanding.

"Yes?" he replied, looking in her eyes.

For a long moment no one said anything, and then they heard a noise in the basement that broke the spell. Mike stood up, still holding El's hand. He pulled her up too.

"Come here," he said letting go to wet the cloth again and turn it until it was just humid. "You got some… Uh…" Mike gestured to her face with the cloth as a suggestion, and El nodded, allowing him to keep on helping her.

First he cared to clean the blood from her nose and ears, and then he got another cloth to be rid of the mud on her forehead and cheeks, brushing soft but efficiently until she was clean. Once he was satisfied, he sighed.

"That's better," he said, and El turned to the mirror to check her reflection.

Not that she really liked it. Now that she had her normal, weirdo hair and the wig was ruined… El reached and touched the short hair almost grieving something she'd never had.

"You don't need it," Mike assured her, which surprised her in a confusing way.

"Still pretty?" El asked, not really believing in the possibility.

"Yeah, pretty," Mike told her with certainty. "Really pretty."

This time, she really smiled at the girl looking at her in the mirror. Okay, she could believe that.

"El?" called Mike.

"Yes?" she said, turning to him.

"Hum… I'm happy you're home," he said it like a confession, and her heart fluttered.

"Me too," she told him. Because she really was. And what a crazy turn, her knowing what a 'home' is, all thanks to him.